



Satellite image with enhanced low cloud-top temperatures (degrees C) for 7:15 a.m. EDT (NOAA)

Agricultural Weather Highlights - Friday - December 27, 2002

- ***In the West***, widespread precipitation is benefiting winter grains and improving mountain snow packs from ***northern California to the northern Rockies***.
- ***On the Plains***, some fields and feedlots remain muddy across ***southern portions of the region*** due to melting snow. In contrast, dry, mild, breezy weather persists on the drought-affected ***northern and central High Plains***, where winter wheat remains vulnerable to potential cold outbreaks.
- ***In the Corn Belt***, mild, dry conditions across the ***upper Midwest*** contrast with cool weather and a substantial snow cover from the ***middle Mississippi Valley to the lower Great Lakes region***.
- ***In the South***, cool weather is slowing evaporation rates, leaving many fields still unfavorably wet for fieldwork and winter wheat development.

Outlook: The storm system over the ***Northwest*** will move farther inland today and begin to weaken, while a second storm will approach the ***West Coast***. The second system will produce another round of beneficial precipitation in the ***Northwest*** during the weekend, followed by a third storm early next week. Meanwhile, mild, mostly dry weather is forecast in the ***Southwest*** and ***east of the Rockies***. Snow may develop on the ***northern Plains*** by Monday, while showers and thunderstorms will accompany a cold front from the ***southeastern Plains to the Ohio Valley***. Showers and thunderstorms are forecast to spread across the ***Delta and Southeast*** by New Year's Eve. The NWS 6-10 day outlook for January 1-5, 2003, calls for above-normal precipitation in the ***Pacific Northwest, northern and central Rockies, central Plains, South, and East***, but drier-than-normal weather is forecast in the ***Southwest and upper Midwest***. Above-normal temperatures are expected across the ***northern half of the Nation***, while cooler-than-normal weather will be limited to the ***south-central U.S.***

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